(c) and (d) The Audit Report of the C&AG for India (Indirect Taxes) for the year 2003-04 on 'Excise duty on Motor Vehicles for transport of persons and goods' has pointed out that reduction in prices of motorcars during the relevant period was not proportionate to the level representing excise duty reduction. It was opined in the Report that manufacturers of motorcars/ vehicles in certain segments retained substantial amounts representing elements of reduced duty and thereby benefited, to the detriment of interest of consumers. The details of the amount reportedly retained by the manufacturers consequent on reduction in excise duty in 2001-02 budget, as compiled in the said Audit Report is as follows:

Manufacturer	Percentage of the total benefit passed on to the consumer	Percentage of the total benefit retained by the manufacturer
Mahindra and Mahindra	51	49
Tata Motors	59	41
Maruti Udyog	66	34
Skoda India	17	83
Honda Siel Cars	57	43

(e) There is no mandatory or legal requirement to pass on every excise duty cut in the same proportion to consumers. Duty cuts can be given for various reasons, including improving the health of the industry, reducing consumer prices, compensating for rising costs in some areas, improving competitiveness and so on. The question of recovery of duty does not arise only because the benefit of the duty reduction is not fully passed on the consumers.

Airports in NER

*130. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of airports which have been improved in the North Eastern Region;

(b) the number of airports that have been improved out of the total airports taken up for improvement;

(c) the number of airports that are still to be improved; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken up improvement of nine airports at Lilabari, Tezpur, Agartala, Imphal, Dimapur, Silchar, Dibrugarh, Shillong and Guwahati in the North Eastern Region in coordination with North East Council (NEC). Of these, improvement works at Tezpur, Agartala and Imphal airports have been completed. These airports are now suitable for operation of A-320/B-738 type of aircraft in instrumental weather condition (IMC).

(c) and (d) Improvement works at remaining six airports shall be taken up during 2005-06 and completed during Tenth Five Year Plan. Improvement works include extension of runway upto 7500 feet to make them suitable for A-320 operations and provision of more parking stands at Silchar and Dibrugarh airports; provision of new terminal buidlings at Shillong and Dibrugarh airports; installation of Instrument Landing Systems at Silchar, Lilabari and Dimapur airports and provision of two passenger boarding bridges and canopy on city side at Guwahati airport.

Tout menance at IGI Airport

*131. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of continuing tout menace at IGI Airport and also the nuisance of loaders stealing articles from the baggages of passengers, especially foreigners, thus tarnishing the image of the country;

(b) the number of tout problems and theft cases reported to the authorities during the last three months at IGI Airport;

(c) whether Government are taking any preventive steps in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?